

CONSTANTIA,

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A

P O E M.

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# CONSTANTIA,

A

## P O E M.

**H**ENCE, *Want*, ungrateful visitant, adieu,  
Pale Empress hence, with all thy meagre crew,  
Sour Discontent, and mortify'd Chagrin ;  
Lean hollow Care, and self-corroding Spleen ;  
Distress and Woe, sad parents of Despair,  
With wringing hands, and ever rueful air ;  
The tread of Dun, and Burn's alarming hand,  
Dire as the touch of Circe's circling wand ;  
Keen Hunger with his sharp, but famish'd eye,  
And dusky Theft, a desp'rate prompter, nigh ;  
While agues shudder to the whistling gale,  
And, jointly, Law and Infamy assail.  
But worse, O worse than all the hideous train,  
Hot-mouth'd Reproach, and saucy writh'd Disdain ;  
These in the rear of thy assembly wait,  
Still point the anguish, and augment the weight.

THE worst oppression, who, ah ! who could bear,  
If Virtue, hov'ring angel, was not there ?  
Where Poverty her blasting progress bends,  
The Goddess with superior wing attends.  
Around the fair her blest associates play,  
Bask in her eye, and whiten in her ray :

A

Bright

Bright Purity, with firm unalter'd cheek,  
 The mild, the kind, the gentle, and the meek ;  
 Humility's benignly placid grace ;  
 And Innocence with sweet seraphic face ;  
 Calm Piety, that smiles amidst the storm ;  
 And Charity with boundless wishes warm.

BOLD in the front, to guard the heav'nly band,  
 Behold the masculine adherents stand !  
 Patience with Atlantean shoulders spread ;  
 Hail Temperance on thrifty viands fed ;  
 Firm Fortitude, unknowing how to yield ;  
 And Perseverance with his batter'd shield ;  
 And honest Industry, whose early toil  
 Wins health and plenty from the labour'd soil.  
 The genuine arts behind the Goddess wait,  
 Her reign illustrate, and improve her state.  
 With eye elate here Contemplation soars,  
 And Learning piles his intellectual stores.  
 Here mental Sciences arranging shine,  
 Here manual Crafts the various task design ;  
 While Diligence the busy finger plies ;  
 And wing'd, from rank to rank, Invention flies.  
 Such wide extremes on indigence attend,  
 There vice assails, the virtues here defend ;  
 Below--the gloom of ev'ry passion forms ;  
 Above--calm virtue mod'rates and reforms ;  
 Here highly elevate,--there deep depreß,  
 And give---or bliss, or anguish, in excess.  
 Hail Virtue ! chaste eternal beauty, hail !  
 Still on the foe, O Goddess, still prevail ;  
 The world, e're fram'd, lay open to thy view,  
 You form'd the whole, and shall again renew :  
 E're I thy arduous pleasing toils decline,  
 Be want, ah ! still be each disaster mine,

'Till

•Till ev'n oppression be itself subdu'd,  
Nor yet a wish for wealth, or power intrude,

NOR be the poor alone thy fav'rite care ;  
Fly, fly to courts, and let the mighty share :  
The filken lethargy at once awake ;  
Debauch from his intemp'rate opiate shake ;  
Thence ev'ry vice, and ev'ry folly drive,  
That sting or glitter round the *gorgeous bribe* ;  
Before thy touch let Insolence retire,  
And Vanity, an empty breath, expire ;  
Hypocrisy cast off the fair disguise,  
And, starting, in his naked gloom arise.  
Now Goddess, entring, view the dome of state,  
Do thou inform, and give me to relate ;  
Let demons envious to my eye appear,  
(Which known, could sure find no admittance here.)  
Amid the buzzing, busy, idle crowd,  
The mix'd assembly of the mean and proud,  
See, Treason smiles, a suitor to his king ;  
See, Promise flutters on a cypress wing ;  
Her pinion like autumnal foliage falls,  
And on the pavement Disappointment crawls ;  
A friendly aspect Enmity assumes ;  
Beneath applause deep lurking Envy glooms ;  
The tempting mammon Subornation shows,  
And in the patriot's zeal Dissention glows.

OPPRESSION there with gently winning grace,  
And Ignorance with solemn thinking face,  
And Pride with mortify'd and christian guise,  
And Infidelity with faintly eyes,  
Four rival candidates, their monarch sue,  
Two for the bench, and for the mitre two.



Lo, there Ambition, from his height elate!  
 And Pleasure loling on a couch of state!  
 On these the pageantry of pomp attends;  
 To these the idolizing tumult bends:  
 The poor, the rich, the peasant, and the peer,  
 And all religions join in worship here.  
 Ambition reaching from his airy stand,  
 Grasps at a globe that shuns his desp'rate hand;  
 Around the glitt'ring sphere, confus'dly gay,  
 Crowns, truncheons, gems, and trophy'd radiance lay;  
 But changing with alternate light and shade,  
 The lures appear and vanish, shine and fade;  
 Vain as the cloudy meteor of the morn,  
 Which fancy forms, and transient rays adorn.

THE prime rewards, four suppliant sons of fame,  
 Lust, Rapine, Violence, and Slaughter claim;  
 And tho' essential happiness is due,  
 For toys the wise, for toys the virtuous sue.  
 Deluded men, the ready ambush fly!  
 Dire lurking deaths behind ambition lye!  
 The mourning block, keen ax, and racking wheel,  
 The poison'd goblet, and the bosom'd steel.

HERE Pleasure on her velvet couch reclines,  
 Smiles to undo, and in destruction shines;  
 With seeming negligence displays her charms,  
 The strong she withers, and the steel'd disarms:  
 Imagination, specious handmaid, waits,  
 And serves a pomp of visionary cates;  
 The forc'refs still essays the fresh repasts;  
 But mock'd eternally, she feeds, and fasts.  
 Around her couch unnumber'd vot'ries meet,

And

And wish to share th' imaginary treat ;  
 Devour each morsel with desiring eye,  
 And for large draughts of fancy'd nectar sigh :  
 A thousand nymphs of wanton sprightly mien,  
 Trip round the sofa, and amuse their Queen ;  
 With transports she surveys the darling train,  
 All daughters of her light fermenting brain ;  
 Here laughter, mirth, and dalliance unite,  
 Illusive joy, and volatile delight,  
 Conceits, sports, gambols, titillations gay,  
 Hopes that allure, and projects that betray.  
 Prime sister of the inessential bands,  
 Erect, persuasive Expectation stands ;  
 On each pursuit she flourishes with grace,  
 And gives a butterfly to lead the chase ;  
 Or wafts a bubble on the parting gale,  
 And bids surrounding multitudes assail ;  
 With sweets the fond pursuit alone is fraught,  
 The game still vanishes when once it's caught :  
 Vain is the joy, but not the anguish vain,  
 An empty pleasure gives essential pain ;  
 Couch'd as a tyger, watchful to surprize,  
 Grim death beneath the false enchantress lies ;  
 The fiends around invisibly engage,  
 Guilt stings, pains rack, and disappointments rage ;  
 Aches, asthmas, cholics, gout, convulsions, rheums,  
 Remorse that gnaws, and languor that consumes.  
 Far other train, apparent Queen ! you lead ;  
 True bliss attends, tho' arduous toils precede ;  
 Serene thy bosom, tho' thy brow severe,  
 Pain points thy path, but heav'n is in thy rear :  
 Wond'rous the influence thy power supplies,  
 Where triumphs only from oppression rise ;

Peace

Peace springs from passion, and from weakness might;  
 Calm ease from travail, and from pain delight;  
 No sweets that vanish, and no gusts that cloy,  
 Clear is the rapture, and serene the joy,  
 Reflection culls from every labour past,  
 And gives the same eternal bliss to last.  
 Thus by long trial, and severe distress,  
 You virtue truly, tho' severely, bless;  
 Thro' each tradition, each recording page,  
 Thro' ev'ry nation, and thro' ev'ry age;  
 From purpl'd monarchs, to the rural hind,  
 By pain you purify'd, by toil refin'd;  
 The mightier weight thy fav'rite heroes bore,  
 Chief you depress'd, whom chief you meant should soar;  
 Still with the foe, gave forces to prevail,  
 And with this *moral* form'd the following *tale*.

WHILE yet the Turk his early claim avow'd,  
 And, rul'd, beneath his sceptre Judah bow'd,  
 A set of worthy, wealthy merchants chose  
 The world for trade, and Sion for repose.  
 Here they select the gems of brightest rays;  
 Rich stuffs, wrought silks, and golden tissue, blaze;  
 Thro' ev'ry climate, and to ev'ry gale,  
 They launch the cargo, and expand the sail;  
 Wide, with their name, their reputation grew,  
 And at their mart concurring chapmen drew.

THE lure of novelty, and thirst of gain,  
 Now points their passage o're the Midland-main;  
 The Tyber now their spumy keels divide,  
 And stem the flow of his descending tide.  
 To Rome, imperial Rome, the traders came;  
 Rome heard the voice of their preceeding fame;



Free mart, and splendid mansion she affords ;  
 Joy crown'd their nights, and elegance their boards

WITH mutual chat they gratify desire,  
 What's curious now relate, and now enquire ;  
 Alike for knowledge, and for wealth they trade,  
 And are with usury in both repaid.  
 But Fame surpriz'd them with a wonder new,  
 Beyond what times of brightest record drew,  
 The poet's fancy, or the lover's tongue ;  
 And thus the darling excellence she sung.

To crown our monarch's age with fond delight,  
 His cares alleviate, and his toils requite,  
 Beyond whate'er paternal wish could crave,  
 Indulgent heav'n a peerless Infant gave :  
 The softer sex her beauteous body forms,  
 But her bright soul each manly virtue warms ;  
 Youth without folly, greatness without pride,  
 And all that's firm to all that's sweet ally'd.  
 Rich, as the land by sacred promise blest'd,  
 Lies the fair vale of her expanded breast ;  
 Mild on a Parian pillar turns her head ;  
 Her front, like Lebanon, divinely spread ;  
 There sit the chaste, the placid, and the meek,  
 And morn smiles fresh upon her open cheek.  
 Babes learn distinction at CONSTANTIA's sight,  
 And wither'd age revives to strange delight ;  
 Tumultous wishes breathe along her way,  
 Hands rise, tongues bless, and cent'ring eyes survey !  
 All run to bend the voluntary knee,  
 The blind to hear her, and the deaf to see.  
 Ah ! were she born to universal sway,  
 How gladly would the willing world obey !

AND

AND now with wealthy manufacture flow'd,  
Launch'd on the tide their freighted vessels rode ;  
The pendants vainly point the fav'ring gale,  
Court the weigh'd anchor, and the opening sail,  
'Till first the fair perfection they beheld,  
Who all report (in fatal hour) excell'd :  
For Syria then they ply the lab'ring oar,  
And the crook'd keels divide their native shore.

EXULTING now they touch the fav'rite land,  
Unlade, and moor along the yielding strand.  
Now, duteous, on their youthful Sultan wait,  
Unfold new treasures, and new tales relate.  
With usual grace, and curious ear he hears ;  
With usual courtesy, and bounty cheers ;  
The strange, the wondrous narratives admires,  
And all that's foreign, all that's new requires.  
Ah, hapless prince ! thy farther search restrain,  
Couch'd in the tale, death lurks to entertain ;  
Constantia's charms their raptur'd tongues disclose,  
In ev'ry word some kindling beauty glows ;  
Her form, her features, mien, and soul they breathe ;  
Unpraise all praise, and leave all terms beneath.

STRONG eloquence can picture to the blind,  
Create new forms, and people all the mind ;  
Can pain, or mitigate, can heal, or wound,  
Enchant with sentences, and kill with sound,  
The fancy'd sweets his ear impatient drinks ;  
Deep on his soul the irrag'd beauty sinks ;  
Thro' all his thoughts, his pow'rs, the lives, the reigns,  
Pants in each pulse, and thrills along his veins.

SURE, thro' the tracts of yon celestial maze,  
Where mystic planets dance, and glories blaze ;

More

More wonders typical impress the sky,  
 Than e'er was trac'd with astrologic eye.  
 There, hap'ly, e're his natal hour exprefs'd,  
 First burn'd the flame that glow'd within his breast;  
 There might the nymph with previous beauty bloom,  
 With previous languishment the youth consume;  
 Expire the victim of successless care,  
 Die e're he liv'd, and, e're he lov'd, despair:  
 There the dear friendly stream, e're Julius bled,  
 Great Brutus to his dearer country shed;  
 With destin'd tyranny there pride enslaves,  
 With destin'd virtue there the patriot saves:  
 There Pompey glow'd for freedom and for fame;  
 There Socrates, of Greece the pride and shame:  
 Alcides there each horrid monster slew;  
 There triumph'd Sampson, the heroic Jew:  
 There all, or doom'd to save, or to destroy,  
 The chiefs who fought at Thebes, or fought at Troy.

LONG mourn'd the youth, with secret woe oppress;  
 The latent vulture prey'd within his breast:  
 Constrain'd at length, nor able to sustain  
 The wasting malady and mental pain,  
 The sage, the bearded pillars of his state  
 He calls, and privily unfolds his fate:  
 "No mean," he cries, "my cruel stars assign,  
 "Swift death, or else Constantia must be mine."

ALTERNATE each their hopes or fears disclose,  
 Invent, reject, and now again propose;  
 While some with mystic rites of wond'rous art,  
 Engage to gain the sympathetic heart;  
 By philter'd science, and infernal charms,  
 To win the bright perfection to his arms.

B

Th' abhor-



Th' abhorrent scheme his gen'rous thoughts disdain,  
 Resolv'd to die, or justly to obtain ;  
 And all their arguments, howe'er renew'd,  
 In rites of nuptial sanctitude conclude.  
 But here again new obstacles appear'd,  
 And much for this their latest hope they fear'd ;  
 Fear'd that diversity of faith might prove  
 Alike diversity and breach in love ;  
 Nor the fair Christian e'er consent to wed  
 A prince in Macon's sacred precepts bred.  
 The monarch then, " Ah ! wherefore doubt my friends,  
 " Why yet dispute, where love and life depends ?  
 " That faith must, sure, have most prevailing charms,  
 " That gives Constantia to my circling arms :  
 " No obstacles shall bar, no doubts deter ;  
 " Nor will I think that she was form'd to err."

THE voice determin'd, and imperial eye,  
 Leave no pretence for courtiers to reply :  
 With the fond speed of love's impatience warm'd,  
 Now embassies are sent and treaties form'd :  
 All zealous to promote the cause divine,  
 The pope, the church, and Christian pow'rs combine ;  
 The royal, long reluctant, parents yield,  
 And contracts are by mutual proxy seal'd.

HIGH was the trust the regal writings bore,  
 And solemn the attesting parties swore,  
 " That the young Syrian, and his barons bold,  
 " Each sex and state, the infant and the old,  
 " Should all Messiah's hallow'd faith embrace,  
 " And bright Constantia be the bond of grace."

WE list not here of pompous phrase to say,  
What order'd equipage prepares the day ;  
Grooms, prelates, peers, and nymphs, a shining train,  
To wait the lovely victim o'er the main :  
All Rome attend in wish the lovely maid,  
And heav'n their universal vows invade.

AT length the day, the woeful day, arrives,  
And ev'ry face of wonted cheer deprives ;  
The fatal hour admits no fond delay,  
That shall the joy from ev'ry heart convey.  
Ye men of Rome ! your parting glory mourn ;  
Far from your sight your darling shall be torn :  
No more the morn with usual smiles arise,  
Or with Constantia bless your longing eyes ;  
Of ev'ry tongue, of ev'ry pen, the theme,  
The daily subject, and the nightly dream.  
But, O Constantia ! say, thou fair distress'd,  
What woes that hour thy lovely soul possess'd ?  
Its native cheek the bright carnation fled,  
And charg'd with grief, reclin'd thy beauteous head ;  
To lands unknown those limbs must now repair,  
Nurs'd in the down of fond paternal care.  
Peace spread thy nightly couch to sweet repose,  
Delight around thy smiling form arose ;  
Each scene familiar to thy eye appear'd,  
And custom long thy native soil endear'd ;  
Eas'd by thy bounty, at thy sight exil'd,  
Grief was no more, or in thy presence smil'd ;  
Each rising wish thy glad attendants seiz'd,  
To give thee pleasure ev'ry heart was pleas'd :  
But now to strange, to foreign climes convey'd,  
Strange objects must thy loathing sense invade,

Strange features to thy weeping eyes appear,  
 Strange accents pierce thy undelighted ear.  
 In distant unacquainted bondage ty'd,  
 The gilded slave of insolence and pride,  
 Perhaps of form uncouth, and temper base,  
 Thy lord shall clasp thee with abhorr'd embrace.

THUS sad the fair revolv'd, soft sorrows flow,  
 And all her sighing soul was loos'd to woe ;  
 " Father ! she cried, your fond, your wretched child ;  
 " And you my mother ! you my mother mild !  
 " My parents dear, beneath whose kindly view,  
 " Bless'd by whose looks your cherish'd infant grew,  
 " When far, O far, from your embraces torn,  
 " Will you then think a wretch like me was born ?  
 " Shall then your child some sad remembrance claim ?  
 " And some dear drops embalm Constantia's name ?  
 " Your face, (ah, cruel fortune can it be !)  
 " These eyes shall never, never, never see ;  
 " For ever parted by the rolling main,  
 " I now must feel a lordly husband's chain ;  
 " From ev'ry friend, from every joy remove,  
 " And the rough yoke of rude barbarians prove :  
 " But so may heav'n the precious issue bless,  
 " And all find happiness through my distress ;  
 " Woman was doom'd e're yet the world began,  
 " The prey of sorrow, and the slave of man."

SHE could no more, her voice by sobbs suppress,  
 And tears pour'd forth in anguish told the rest.  
 Wide through the croud the sad contagion flew,  
 Each hoary beard is drench'd with mournful dew ;  
 In short'ning throbs ten thousand bosoms rise,  
 Grief show'rs its tempest from ten thousand eyes ;

Along



Along the shore the deep'ning groans extend,  
 And louder shrieks the cloudy concave rend :  
 Not thro' old Rome when desolation reign'd,  
 And bleeding senators her forum stain'd ;  
 Not in the wreck of that all dismal night,  
 When Ilion tumbled from her tow'ry height,  
 Such utt'ring plaints the deep despair betray'd,  
 As now attend the dear departing maid.  
 To the tall ship with slow desponding tread,  
 All drown'd in grief the beauteous victim's led,  
 She turn'd, and with an aching wistful look,  
 A long farewell of ev'ry field she took :  
 Adieu ! to all the melting croud she cry'd ;  
 Adieu ! adieu ! the melting croud reply'd :  
 Her launching bark the mournful notes pursue,  
 And ecchoing hills return, Adieu ! adieu !

HERE let us leave the Virgin on the main,  
 With all her peerage, and her pompous train ;  
 To Syria let the swifter muse repair,  
 And say what cheer prepares her welcome there.  
 The dame, from whom his birth the prince deriv'd,  
 Imperial dowager, had yet surviv'd,  
 Ambitious, greedy of supreme controul,  
 And born with all the tyrant in her soul.  
 At filial government she long repin'd,  
 Nor yet the reins of secret rule resign'd.  
 Her savage sentiments her sex bely'd,  
 And, vers'd in wiles, with deepest statesman vy'd ;  
 Yet o'er her softning tongue and soothing face,  
 The subtle varnish spread with easy grace ;  
 The sage discern'd, but still confess'd her sway,  
 And whom their hearts detest, their fears obey.

Tenacious

Tenacious zeal her prophet's lore rever'd,  
The practice scorn'd, but to the text adher'd ;  
And far as faith with fury could enflame,  
She was indeed a most religious dame.

WHEN she her son's determin'd bent perceiv'd,  
Her breasts with cruel agitation heav'd,  
Her call, each hoary, each experienc'd friend,  
In haste and midnight privacy attend ;  
When dire amid the dusky throng she rose,  
And from her tongue contagious poison flows :

“ YE peers ! ye pillars of our falling state !  
“ Too faithful subjects of a prince ingrate ;  
“ A son, whom these detesting breasts have fed,  
“ A serpent grown ; to your destruction bred.  
“ Say, shall a single hand such patriots awe ?  
“ Insult your prophet, and supplant your law ?  
“ First, Heav'n ! be all the bonds of nature broke,  
“ E'er I assume the curs'd, the Christian yoke ;  
“ For what import these innovating rites,  
“ But here a living death of all delights ?  
“ Such threats, as penitence can ne'er appease,  
“ The body's penance, and the mind's disease ?  
“ Yet, were I of some faithful hearts secure,  
“ Not such the malady, but we can cure.”

SHE spoke, and all with swift compliance swear  
The glorious deed with all their powers to dare ;  
Her charge, tho' ne'er so bloody, to fulfil,  
Tho' ne'er so dang'rous, to effect her will.

“ DOUBT not a birth, she cried, so well conceiv'd,  
“ Great acts are more by fraud than force achiev'd ;

“ To

" To gain the conquest we must seem to yield,  
 " And feign to fly, that we may win the field;  
 " Let each in public wear a Christian face,  
 " And counterfeit the faintly signs of grace,  
 " What tho' our skin the sprinkling priest baptize,  
 " Our skin's unfullied, while our hearts despise.  
 " Not such the tricks our bolder hands shall play,  
 " When revels end the unsuspecting day;  
 " Nor such the stream our purpling points shall shed,  
 " When we shall, in our turn, baptize with red."

An sex ! still sweet or bitter to extreme,  
 Gloomy as night, or bright as morning beam :  
 No fiend may with a female fraud compare,  
 No angel's purity, like woman's fair ;  
 To save, or damn, for bliss or ruin given,  
 Who has thee feels a hell, or finds a heav'n.

SMOOTH is the surface of the dimpl'd main,  
 While brooding storms the gath'ring ruin rein ;  
 Her son, with dire dissembling leer, she seeks,  
 And in the depth of smiling malice speaks :

" MY child ! tho' froward age is overwise,  
 " Let no offence against a parent rise.  
 " Long habits gain a privilege from time,  
 " And frequent custom mellows ev'ry crime.  
 " Repugnant hence I dar'd to thwart your will,  
 " I fear'd the novelty, I fear'd the ill.  
 " But now convinc'd by Christ's superior grace,  
 " His law I rev'rence, and his faith embrace.  
 " Bless'd be thy bed ! thy bridal transports bless'd !  
 " Nor you refuse a mother's fond request ;

" Mine



" Mine be the joy to entertain the fair,  
 " To form the festival be mine the care,  
 " To show the peers who on thy bride attend,  
 " As she in beauty, we in love transcend."

THE royal youth suspense in wonder stood,  
 Joy held his voice, and rapture thrill'd his blood;  
 Around her knees his prostrate arms he threw,  
 And duteous tears distill'd the grateful dew;  
 Her son she rais'd, all innocent of ill,  
 And smiling kiss'd, whom soon she meant to kill.

AT length the bride and all her solemn train,  
 Pass'd o'er the danger of the Midland main:  
 The main is pass'd, but not the danger o'er,  
 The sea less cruel than the Syrian shore.  
 Applauding crouds the landed beauty greet,  
 And Judah's peers in rich procession meet.  
 Great was the throng, and splendid the array,  
 And guards arranging lin'd the glitt'ring way.  
 Such were the triumphs of imperial Rome,  
 When conquest led some darling victor home;  
 While meeting millions his approach withstand,  
 And walls, and trees, and chamber'd roofs are mann'd.

ALL gem'd in ornaments of curious mode,  
 Gay in the van, the false Sultana rode;  
 Oft to her breast she clasp'd the heav'nly maid,  
 And wond'ring oft with cruel gaze survey'd.

LAST came the Sultan, royal, hapless youth,  
 Grace in his form, and in his bosom truth,  
 The last he came, for tim'rous love controll'd,  
 He fear'd, and long'd, and trembl'd to behold;

A faint

A faint salute his fault'ring voice supply'd,  
 Scarce, Welcome, O! divinely fair, he cry'd;  
 He blush'd, and sigh'd, and gaz'd with wav'ring view,  
 Nor dares to hope the blissful vision true.

Thus onward to a neighb'ring town they far'd,  
 In purpos'd pomp, and regal state prepar'd;  
 And here the old maternal fiend invites,  
 To order'd feasts, and dearly bought delights.  
 Down sit the guests, triumphing clarions blow,  
 Drums beat, mirth sings, and brimming goblets flow;  
 In boundless revel ev'ry care is drown'd,  
 And clamour shouts and freedom laughs around.

AN hapless state of ev'ry human mind!  
 Wrapt in the present, to the future blind.  
 In the gay vapour of a lucky hour,  
 Light folly mounts, and looks with scorn on power;  
 Nor sees how swift the tides of fortune flow,  
 The swelling happiness, and ebbing woe;  
 That man, should ne'er indulge, or bless, or care,  
 The prosp'rous triumph, or the wretch despair;  
 So close, so sudden each reverse succeeds,  
 And mischief treads where-e'er success preceeds.

AND now the night with brooding horrors still,  
 Gloom'd from the brow of each adjacent hill;  
 Slow heav'd her bosom with distemper'd breath,  
 And o'er her forehead hung the weights of death.  
 Opprest with sleep, and drown'd in fummy wine,  
 The prostrate guards their regal charge resign;  
 But far within, still wakeful to delight,  
 The prince and peers protract the festal night;

C

When

When from the portal, lo! a sudden gloom,  
 Projects its horrors through the spacious room;  
 Fearful and dark the ruffian bands appear,  
 The dire Sultana storming in the rear.  
 The bloody task invading treason plies,  
 Quick, and at once alarm'd the nobles rise;  
 But these, as faith or faction led, divide,  
 And, traitors most, with ent'ring traitors side.  
 Boards, bowls and seats o'erturn'd the pavement strow,  
 Of blood with wine the mingling currents flow.  
 Vain is the fear that wings their feet for flight,  
 They fall who basely fly or bravely fight;  
 With screams and groans the echoing courts resound,  
 And gasping Romans bite the trait'rous ground.

SAY, royal Syrian! in that hour of death,  
 Say, didst thou tamely then resign thy breath?  
 Surprise and shame, and love and boundless rage,  
 Flash from his eyes, and in his breast engage.  
 Threatning, aloft his flaming steel he drew,  
 And swift to save his lov'd Constantia flew;  
 Before his bride a beauteous bulwark stands,  
 Now presses on, and backwards bears the bands;  
 Bold to his aid surviving Romans spring;  
 Some Syrians too could dare to join their king;  
 Invaded late they in their turn invade,  
 And traitors are with mutual death repaid.  
 But what may courage, what may strength avail,  
 Where still o'erpow'ring multitudes assail;  
 Where number with encreasing number grows,  
 And ev'ry sword must match a thousand foes?  
 As melting snows with gradual waste subside,  
 So sink the warriors from their hero's side;

Thin'd



Thin'd are the remnants of his bleeding train ;  
 And scarce, but scarce, th' unequal strife sustain ;  
 Their veins exhausted, and o'ertoil'd their might,  
 And struggling but to fall the last, they fight.

THE monarch thus on ev'ry side distress'd,  
 And hope extinguish'd in his valiant breast,  
 Turn'd to his queen : he sent the parting look,  
 And brief th' eternal last adieu he took.  
 " Since here," he cry'd, " our hapless loves must end,  
 " Where this arm fails, may mightier heav'n defend :  
 " This is my last, my only fond desire ;  
 " Too blest'd am I, who in thy cause expire."  
 So saying, with recruited pow'rs he glows,  
 Exalted treads, and overlooks his foes ;  
 Of more than mortal size the warrior seems,  
 And terror from his eye imperial streams :  
 The circling host his single voice defies ;  
 Amid the throng, with fury wing'd, he flies ;  
 Deep bites his sword, in heaps on heaps they fall,  
 Hands, arms, and heads bespread the sanguin'd hall ;  
 Untir'd with toil, resistless in his course,  
 Disdain gave fury, and despair gave force ;  
 As here and there his conqu'ring steps he bends,  
 Down his fair form the purpling stream descends ;  
 Exhausted nature wou'd persuade to yield,  
 But courage still tenacious holds the field.  
 As when the lamp its wav'ring light essays,  
 The source consum'd that fed the vital blaze,  
 Extinguish'd now its kindly flame appears,  
 And now aloft a livelier radiance rears ;  
 Subsides by fits, by fits again aspires,  
 And bright, but doubtful, burn its fainting fires ;

Till recollected to one force of light,  
 Sudden she flashes into endless night.  
 So the brave youth the blaze of life renews,  
 Reels, stands, defends, attacks, and still subdues ;  
 Till ev'ry vein, and ev'ry channel drain'd,  
 One last effort his valiant arm sustain'd ;  
 As light'ning swift, he sped the latest blow,  
 And greatly fell, expiring on his foe.  
 As should an oak within some village stand,  
 Young, tall, and strait, the fav'rite of the land,  
 Beneath the dews of heav'n sublime he grows ;  
 Beneath his shade the weary'd find repose ;  
 To deck his boughs each morn the maidens rise,  
 And youths around his form contest the prize ;  
 Yet hap'ly if a sudden storm descend,  
 Sway'd by the blast, his beauteous branches bend ;  
 But vig'rous, to their towering height recoil,  
 Maintain the combat, and outbrave the toil ;  
 Till the red bolt with levell'd ruin shoots,  
 And cuts the pillar'd fabric from the roots ;  
 Swift falls the beauty o'er a length of ground,  
 The nymphs and swains incessant mourn around.  
 So did the youth with living form excell,  
 So fair, so tall, and so lamented, fell ;  
 Relenting traitors would revive the dead,  
 And weep the blood their ruthless weapons shed ;  
 One tender pang the dire Sultana felt,  
 And nature, spite of hell, compells to melt.

WHILE sudden thus each bloody arm suspends,  
 And round their prince the satiate tumult bends,  
 Regardless of her fate, Constantia goes  
 Thro' pointed jav'lines, and a host of foes ;

Amaze

Amaze before the daring virgin yields,  
And Innocence from ev'ry weapon shields;  
'Till mourning by the great remains she stood,  
And o'er her lover pour'd the copious flood.

" Ah, valiant arm ! a waste of worth in vain !

" Ah, royal youth," she cry'd, " untimely slain !

" O ! had I perish'd, e're I reach'd thy shore,

" The surge devour'd, or watry monsters tore,

" To bless the world your worth had yet surviv'd,

" Nor I, too fatally belov'd, arriv'd.

" 'Tis I, who have this dear effusion shed ;

" For me, for me, a luckless bride, you bled,"

So saying---furious, the Sultana cries ;

" Strike, strike ; the source of all our mischief dies :"

" Yes, strike," the bright, th' intrepid maid replies.

But vainly this consents, or that commands ;

Heav'n check'd their hearts, and pity bound their hands :

At once a thousand jav'lins rise in air ;

A thousand wishes whisper,-----ah ! forbear ;

Recoiling arms the bloody task refuse,

And beauty with resistless charms subdues.

Alone relentless, the Sultana cries,

" 'Tis well, the death she wish'd, may still suffice ;

" Hence with that form, that knows so well to reign,

" Hence with the witch, and plunge her in the main ;

" Her passage thence to Rome she may explore,

" And tell her welcome one the Syrian shore."

So saying, quick to a selected band

She gave to execute the dire command :

Reluctant to the charge they yet obey,

And to the shore the mourning fair convey :

Slow as she mov'd, soft sorrows bathe the ground,

Her guards too melt, and pitying weep around ;

Tho'



Tho' vers'd in blood, detest the stern commands,  
 And feel their hearts rebellious to their hands.  
 When now upon th' appointed beach they stood,  
 That look'd with horror o'er the deepn'ing flood,  
 Each ey'd his fellow with relenting look,  
 And each to each the cruel task forlook ;  
 With distant awe the heav'nly maid survey,  
 Nor once her harm in act or thought essay.  
 The still suspense at length their leader broke,  
 And bow'd before the trembling beauty spoke :  
 " O thou ! endow'd with more than mortal charms,  
 " Who ev'ry foe of all his force disarms,  
 " Say, how shall we our pow'r or will employ,  
 " Where both are weak to spare thee or destroy ;  
 " Both impotent alike, our pow'r and will,  
 " The means to save thee, or the thoughts to kill ?  
 " Yet one extreme may cruelly remain,  
 " To yield thee hap'ly to the pitying main ;  
 " And heav'n, who form'd thee so divinely fair,  
 " If heav'n has pow'r, will sure have will to spare."

He said, the rest assent, and to the bay  
 With secret steps the virgin bride convey :  
 Convenient here a Roman bark they find,  
 They hoist the hasty canvas to the wind ;  
 The bark with Roman wealth and plenty stow'd,  
 Now launching with the lonely sailer rode ;  
 The gale from shore with ready rapture blew,  
 And to her vessel bore the last adieu.

Now, stain'd with blood, the self-convicted night  
 Fled from the face of all-enquiring light ;  
 And morn, unconscious of the murd'rous scene,  
 O'er Syria, guilty Syria, rose serene.

The

The mountains sink before Constantia's eyes,  
 Wing'd o'er the surge her bounding galley flies.  
 From fight of land, and human face conveys,  
 The skies alone above, and all around the seas.

Go, lovely mariner! imperial fair!  
 The warring winds, and angry ocean dare;  
 Strange climes and spheres (a long advent'rer) view,  
 New to the main, and to misfortune new:  
 Without the chart, or polar compass steer,  
 Nor storms, in which the stoutest tremble, fear,  
 But ill those limbs, for gentle office form'd,  
 And in the down of nightly softness warm'd,  
 Shall now, obsequious to the ruder gale,  
 Command the frozen cord and pond'rous sail;  
 Shall now, beneath the watry sky obscure,  
 The nightly damp, and piercing blast endure.

THUS all disconsolate, and sore distress'd,  
 And sorrow heaving in her beauteous breast,  
 Down sinks the fair, her hands in anguish rise,  
 And up to heav'n she lifts her streaming eyes.  
 "O, Thou!" she said, "whence ev'ry being rose,  
 "In whom they safe exist, and soft repose;  
 "Fix'd in whose pow'r, and patent to whose eye,  
 "Immenſe, thoſe copious worlds of wonders lye;  
 "To me the meanest of thy works, descend,  
 "To me, the laſt of ev'ry being, bend;  
 "Since, not exempt, in thy paternal care  
 "The loweſt triumph, and minuteſt ſhare;  
 "Thy ſubjects all, and all their ſovereign know,  
 "The ſeas that eddy, and the winds that blow:  
 "The winds thy ruling inſpiration tell;  
 "The ſeas exulting in thy preſence ſwell:

"O'e

" O'er these, o'er those (Supreme) do thou preside ;  
 " For I desire no other star to guide :  
 " In want and weakness, be thy pow'r display'd,  
 " And thou assist, where else no arm can aid.  
 " But if (as surely every mortal must,)  
 " If now I hasten to my native dust,  
 " From the dread hour, and this devouring deep,  
 " The spark of deathless animation keep :  
 " Then may my soul as bright instinctive flame,  
 " Aspiring then, thy kindred radiance claim ;  
 " Or to some humbler heav'n the trembler raise,  
 " Tho' there the last, the first to sing thy praise ;  
 " Some lowly vacant seat (eternal) deign,  
 " Nor be creation, and redemption vain."

So pray'd the maid, and Peace, a wonted guest,  
 Sought the known mansion of her spotless breast ;  
 To ev'ry peril arm'd, and pain resign'd,  
 Chear in her looks, and patience in her mind.

THE wind fresh blowing from the Syrian shore,  
 Swift thro' the floods her spuming vessel bore ;  
 Long breath'd the current of the eastern gale,  
 And swell'd th' expanse of each distended sail.  
 And now the hills of Candia rise to view,  
 As evening clouds and settl'd vapours blue ;  
 And now (still driv'n before the orient blaff)  
 Morea, and her length'ning capes are pass'd ;  
 Now land again her wistful prospect flies,  
 And gives th' unvarying ocean to her eyes ;  
 'Till Malta's rocks, emerging from the main,  
 The circling war of earth and sea maintain.  
 Alike unknown, each varying clime appear'd,  
 The land and main alike the virgin fear'd ;

While



While ev'ry coast her wand'ring eyes explore,  
Reminds her soul of Syria's hostile shore;  
And more than ev'ry monster seas can yield,  
From man, from man, she begs that heav'n would shield.

FULL many a day, and many a night forlorn,  
Thro' shelves and rocks, and eddying tempest born,  
Thro' drizzling sky, and nightly damp severe,  
No fire to warm, no social face to chear;  
On many a meal of tainted viands fed,  
The chill blast whistling round her beauteous head;  
The pensive innocent attends her fate,  
Amidst surrounding deaths and storms, sedate.

YE filken sons of affluence and pride!  
Whose fortunes roll a soft superfluous tide,  
Who yet on visionary wants refine,  
And rack'd with false, fantastic woes, repine:  
And ye, whom penury and sharp distress,  
With bitter, but salubrious med'cine bless;  
Behold that sex! whose softness men despise;  
Behold a maid! who might instruct the wise;  
Give patience precedent, fierce frenzy 'swage,  
And with philosophy new form the sage.  
For her the tides of regal fulness flow'd;  
For her oppression heap'd the cumb'rous load;  
In affluence humble, in misfortune great,  
She stands the worst alternatives of fate.

At length, her galley wing'd before the blast,  
Swift launching, thro' the straits of Ceuta pass'd;  
And winding now before the varying gale,  
Tempestuous Aufter rends her lab'ring sail;

D

Hispania's

Hispania's realm th' obsequious vessel coasts,  
 Now Gallia's surge the beauteous burthen hoasts;  
 Till last, Britannia's wave the charge receives,  
 And from th' Atlantic main, exalting, heaves;  
 The destin'd freight with pleas'd emotion bore,  
 And gently wafted to Northumbria's shore.

BUT haply now 'twere obvious to demand,  
 How borne from Solyma's far-distant land,  
 Thro' many a clime and strait, that might restrain,  
 The gust of winter, and th' o'erwhelming main,  
 Britannia's coast should fix the wand'ring maid,  
 Thro' such a length of devious tracts convey'd.

SAY first, when ships in dizzy whirlwinds wheel,  
 Who points the fervor of the am'rous steel?  
 Wing'd by whose breath the bidden tempests blow?  
 Heav'd in whose fullness mighty oceans flow?  
 Yet what are winds that blow, or seas that roll,  
 The globe stupendous, or the poising pole?  
 What the sev'n planets on their axis spun?  
 What the wide system of our cent'ring sun?  
 A point, an atom, to the ambient space,  
 Where worlds on worlds in circling myriads race.  
 Yet these th' inanimate volution keep,  
 And roll elliptic thro' the boundless deep:  
 While one hand weighs the infinite suspense,  
 Th' insensate loads, and measures the immense;  
 Within, without, thro' height and depth presides,  
 With equal arm, the bark, or planet guides.  
 By thee, uplifted thro' the pathless skies,  
 With conscious plume the birds of passage rise:  
 Thro' thee their patent longitude is known,  
 The stated climate, and the varying zone.

Thy

Thy will informs the universal plan,  
 The ways of angels, and the ways of man ;  
 The moral and material world connects,  
 Thro' each (supreme) both governs and inspects ;  
 Conducts the blood thro' each arterial round,  
 Conducts each system thro' the vast profound ;  
 One rule, the joint, the boundless model forms,  
 And the small ant to love of order warms ;  
 Alike, thro' high and low, and great and small ;  
 Nor aught's mysterious, or mysterious all,

WHAT time the wafting tide and fav'ring blast  
 The fair on Britain's fated region cast,  
 Young Alla then Northumbria's sons obey'd,  
 Whose substituted sceptre Offa sway'd ;  
 Illustrious Offa, who in worth excell'd,  
 Whate'er the rolls of Saxon heroes held :  
 Alone Rodolphus, to the chief ally'd,  
 Excell'd in arms, but much excell'd in pride,  
 High on the brow of a commanding steep,  
 And full in prospect of the eastern deep,  
 His seat, address'd for war, as for repose,  
 And fix'd with elegance, brave Offa chose.  
 And now the hero, at his wonted hour,  
 Where trees o'er-arching form'd the sylvan bow'r,  
 With Hermigilda fought the evening air,  
 His bride, the fairest of the Saxon fair ;  
 When from the main, and obvious to the view,  
 Th' apparent wreck their fix'd attention drew,  
 And quickly, by innate compassion led,  
 Attended, to the neighb'ring shore they sped :  
 Constantia here sole mariner they found,  
 Admiring gaze, and silently surround,



Her eyes to heav'n the grateful charmer rais'd,  
 And with mute thanks of swift acceptance prais'd ;  
 Then turn'd, with suppliant mien her arms extends,  
 And lowly at their feet for mercy bends :  
 Tho' pagans, yet with native virtues blest'd,  
 The sentiment humane inform'd their breast :  
 They her sad narrative of woes enquire,  
 Prompt to redress, as courteous to desire.  
 With moving eloquence the maid began,  
 And thro' a length of strange disasters ran ;  
 What truth requir'd, with artless grace reveal'd ;  
 What prudence check'd, with graceful art conceal'd ;  
 Pathetic gave her suff'rings to the view ;  
 But o'er her state a specious cov'ring threw.  
 Sweet flow'd the accents of her gentle tongue,  
 Attention on the mournful music hung :  
 Each heart a sympathetic anguish felt ;  
 Who saw that face, and could refuse to melt ?  
 Great Offa's bride, with answ'ring woes distress'd,  
 With streaming eyes, and clasping arms caress'd ;  
 Officious now to please, and prompt to aid,  
 They to the palace lead the peerless maid :  
 With feast, and song, and social aspect chear,  
 And as of more than mortal mold revere.

HERE, pleas'd with privacy, and long content,  
 Her days the universal charmer spent ;  
 To office apt, and each obliging art,  
 She kindly stole the voluntary heart ;  
 Ador'd around, a mental empire gain'd,  
 And still a queen thro' ev'ry bosom reign'd.

WHAT winning pow'r on beauty's charm attends !  
 The rude it softens, and the bigot bends.

What

What precept from Constantia's lips can fail?  
 What truth so musical, and not prevail?  
 Persuasive while she pleads, the priest might learn,  
 The deaf find ears, and e'en the blind discern.  
 Soon thro' the house of gen'rous Offa spread,  
 Her pleasing tongue its sacred influence shed;  
 And all the cordial profelytes of grace,  
 The Christian law, the law of love, embrace.  
 But ah, sweet maid! how short is thy repose!  
 Nor hope that here thy scenes of suffering close;  
 Heav'n speeds the planet that o'er-rul'd thy birth,  
 And hastes to make an angel, e'en on earth.

RODOLPHUS to the Saxon chief ally'd,  
 Whose strength of limb with mightiest giants vy'd,  
 Of feature crude, and insolent of soul,  
 Whose heart nor knew or mercy, or controul,  
 He saw, and tho' to deeds of discord bred,  
 He saw, and on the lovely vision fed:  
 Swift thro' his veins the sulph'rous poison run:  
 But women seem'd all obvious to be won.  
 Malicious fervor prompts him to enjoy;  
 Dire is the love that's eager to destroy.  
 Vows, pray'rs, and oaths, and menaces he try'd,  
 And priz'd alike the prostitute, or bride;  
 But when repuls'd with merited disdain,  
 He found all threats, as all intreaties, vain,  
 The flame that gloomy in his bosom burn'd,  
 To deadly hate by swift transition turn'd,  
 And nightly, in his dark designing soul,  
 Dire future scenes and schemes infernal roll.

MEAN time, the sons of hostile Scotia arm,  
 And fame thro' Albion gives the loud alarm;  
 Young

Young Alla at the warlike call arose,  
 And speeds with answ'ring boldness to oppose ;  
 While Offa, with glad heart, and honours due,  
 To welcome his approaching sov'reign flew.

AND now Rodolphus, of whose baleful breast  
 The fiends and ev'ry fury stood possess'd,  
 On ills of cruellest conception bent,  
 To perpetrate his deadly purpose meant.

ALL wrapt in clouds, from heav'n's nocturnal sleep,  
 Mid darkness hung, and weigh'd the world to sleep ;  
 When Offa's consort and the Roman maid,  
 By unsuspecting innocence betray'd,  
 Divinely pious, and divinely fair,  
 Tir'd with long vigil and the nightly pray'r,  
 Together lock'd in calm oblivion lay,  
 Not both to rise and greet returning day ;  
 Rodolphus, unperceiv'd, invades the room,  
 His bosom darker than the midnight gloom :  
 Dire o'er the gentle fair the felon stands,  
 A ponyard thirsting in his impious hands.  
 As should some cottager with hourly care,  
 Two lambs, his sole delight and substance rear,  
 With fondness at his rural table fed,  
 Beneath his eye, and in his bosom bred ;  
 Till fierce for blood, and watchful to devour,  
 Some prowling wolf perceives the absent hour,  
 His nightly tread thro' some sly postern bends,  
 And the meek pair with savage fury rends :  
 So sweet, so innocent the fair ones lay ;  
 So stern, the humane savage views his prey :  
 His steel swift plung'd thro' Hermigilda's breast,  
 From the pure form dismiss'd the purer guest.

Without



Without one sigh her gentle soul expires,  
 And wak'd in bliss, the wond'rous change admires,  
 Beyond, beyond what utt'rance e'er can name,  
 Or vision of extatic fancy frame.  
 Not so, bright maid ! thy harder fate intends ;  
 A simple death was only meant for friends :  
 For thee, he hoards the fund of future ill,  
 And spares with tenfold cruelty to kill,  
 Close by Constantia, lovely sleeping maid,  
 His reeking steel the murd'rous ruffian laid :  
 Revolv'd within his breast new mischiefs brew,  
 And smiling horribly the fiend withdrew.

THICK darkness yet withstood approaching day,  
 And camp'd upon the western summits lay :  
 And scarce the straggling rays of orient light,  
 Excursive, pierc'd the paler realms of night,  
 Their passage thro' Constantia's casement won,  
 And view'd the brightest form beneath the sun,  
 When the first glories of her opening eyes,  
 With prompt, with early elevation rise ;  
 Its wing tow'rd heav'n her walking soul extends,  
 And in a rapsody of praise ascends.  
 But ah ! not long those lively transports burn ;  
 Confus'd, alarm'd, her thoughts to earth return ;  
 All chill, and in the vital current drown'd,  
 Pale at her side her lovely friend she found ;  
 A cloud of horror quick involv'd the fair,  
 And utt'ring shrieks express'd the loud despair ;  
 Walk'd to her griefs, the scar'd domestics rose,  
 In rush'd the train, shrill ecchoing to her woes,  
 O'er the pale dame a mourning torrent shed,  
 And with repeated cries invoke the dead :

Rodolphus

Rodolphus too, with well-dissembl'd fears,  
 And face of busy, feign'd concern, appears :  
 From heav'n's high wrath, with swift perdition sped,  
 He calls down vengeance on the guilty head ;  
 Apparent zeal his earnest visage fires,  
 And (loud) the murd'rer for himself inquires.  
 With bloody marks of dire conjecture stain'd,  
 Constantia, hapless virgin, stands arraign'd :  
 The fair with fears her guiltless cause essays ;  
 But ah ! each specious circumstance betrays.  
 Rude cords around her polish'd arms they strain ;  
 Strong pleads the innocent, but pleads in vain.  
 Far were thy friends, Constantia ! lovely maid !  
 Far distant all, that had the pow'r to aid ;  
 From guilt, from death, from infamy to save,  
 Or shed a tear upon a stranger's grave.

AND now the tale, with deadly tidings fraught,  
 To Offa's ear a speedy courier brought.  
 Heart-pierc'd with anguish stood the mourning chief,  
 No plaints express'd th' unutterable grief ;  
 No sighs exhale, no streaming sorrows flow,  
 Fix'd and immovable in speechless woe.  
 Compassion touch'd the gen'rous Alla's breast,  
 For his brave subject, for his friend distress'd ;  
 Each circumstance the royal youth enquires,  
 And the dire act his just resentment fires.  
 By specious proofs of false suggestion led,  
 He vows full vengeance on Constantia's head ;  
 To doom the luckless innocent he speeds,  
 And in his wrath the previous victim bleeds.  
 Fame flies before, with voluntary wing,  
 A thousand distant shouts proclaim their king ;

Pour'd

Pour'd from all parts the populace unite,  
 And on his form insatiate feed their fight:  
 For Alla bright in each perfection shone,  
 That grac'd the cottage, or enrich'd the throne;  
 The nerve Herculean brac'd his youthful arm,  
 His cheek imbib'd the virgin's softest charm:  
 Mild was his soul, all spotless as his form;  
 His virtues not severe, but chaste and warm;  
 His manners sweet and sprightly, yet sincere;  
 His judgment calm and deep, yet quick and clear:  
 Graceful his speech, above the flow'rs of art;  
 Open his hand, more bounteous yet his heart:  
 As mercy soft, kind, social and humane;  
 Vice felt alone, that Alla held the rein;  
 To all the pride of courts, and pomp of show,  
 The brightest ornament, yet greatest foe.

WITHIN, without, thus rich in ev'ry grace,  
 And all the angel in his soul and face,  
 Not form'd to feel love's passion, but impart,  
 No charms were yet found equal to his heart;  
 For him each virgin sigh'd, but sigh'd in vain,  
 By him unpitied, since unknown the pain.

DETESTING flattery, yet fond of fame,  
 Thro' deadly fields he fought a deathless name;  
 Still foremost there, he sprung with youthful heat,  
 And war, not love, gave Alla's breast to beat;  
 Each foe he conquer'd, and each friend retain'd,  
 And scepter'd in his subjects bosoms reign'd.

AND now arriv'd----severe in solemn state,  
 (Whence no appeal) the grand tribunal sat:

E

Great



Great Alla, thron'd conspicuous to the view,  
 Attention, love, and cent'ring rev'rence drew.  
 In form, the deadly process strait began ;  
 Wide thro' the croud a doubtful murmur ran.  
 Rodolphus chief the friendless pris'ner charg'd,  
 Enforc'd the pain, and on the guilt enlarg'd.  
 The fair unknown to her defence they cite ;  
 Guarded she comes, as pure as angels bright ;  
 As tho' delight and grief at once combin'd,  
 And fled to her, displeas'd with all mankind :  
 Or as delight would grief in grief excell,  
 Or grief could find delight with her to dwell.  
 Pensive she moves, majestically slow,  
 And with a pomp of beauty decks her woe :  
 All murmurs silenc'd by her presence cease,  
 And from her eye the yielding croud gives place ;  
 Ev'n Alla's looks his softning soul confess'd,  
 And all resentment died within his breast.  
 But ah ! while shame with injur'd honour vies,  
 And yet her tongue its fault'ring task denies,  
 More than all phrase, or studied quaint address,  
 Her down-cast eyes, and speaking looks express.  
 At length pathetic, with a starting tear,  
 She thus to bow'd attention charm'd the ear.

“ WHERE may the wretched for protection bend ?  
 “ Or when, ah ! when, shall my misfortunes end ?  
 “ Sure, persecution in the grave will cease,  
 “ And death bestow, what life denies me, peace.  
 “ Driv'n from before the face of human kind,  
 “ Earth, air, and sea, with cruel man combin'd ;  
 “ Each hour, each element prepar'd a foe,  
 “ And nature seem'd exhausted in my woe.

“ At

" At length with ev'ry grace and virtue crown'd,  
 " One friend, one pitying faithful friend I found ;  
 " With her (retir'd) to pass my days I chose,  
 " And here presum'd to taste a late repose.  
 " But peace to me alike all climes refuse,  
 " And mischief to the farthest pole pursues :  
 " 'Tis even a crime to be Constantia's friend,  
 " Nor less than death to those who would defend.  
 " Ah Hermigilda ! could my forfeit life  
 " To thy fond husband give the faithful wife,  
 " From death recall thy chastly featur'd charms,  
 " And yield thee to the gen'rous Offa's arms,  
 " Ah ! gladly would I then resign my breath,  
 " If life so dear could be reviv'd by death :  
 " But thus to die, with foul suspicion stain'd,  
 " For murder, murder of my friend, arraign'd !  
 " Alas ! unskill'd in ev'ry cruel art,  
 " Had I the pow'r to hurt, I want the heart :  
 " No creature e'er Constantia's malice felt,  
 " Ev'n suff'ring foes have taught my heart to melt ;  
 " My heart, for birds, for insects oft distress'd,  
 " And pity is its known, its only guest.  
 " O youth ! thy happy people's boasted theme,  
 " O Alla, sacred to the breath of fame,  
 " To whom subjected realms their rights submit,  
 " Who thron'd in judgment like an angel sit,  
 " Still more extensive be thy guardian care,  
 " And let the innocent, the stranger, share."

HERE rudely on her plea Rodolphus broke,  
 And all inflam'd, and interrupting, spoke.

" Lift not, O king, to that bewitching tongue,  
 " So sweetly false the tempting Syrens sung ;

" Her words wou'd give the knotted oak an ear,  
 " And charm the moon from her enchanted sphere.  
 " That by her hand our dear relation bled,  
 " This sword shall witness on her guilty head,  
 " Whatever champion, or bold odds oppose,  
 " And arm'd by justice, dare a thousand foes :  
 " Then be her purity by combat try'd,  
 " And by the conqu'ring arm let heav'n decide."

" ALAS, O Alla, (cry'd the trembling maid)  
 " My sex not arms but innocence must aid ;  
 " Helpless I stand, and distant ev'ry friend  
 " That has the pow'r, or courage to defend.  
 " If justice is ordain'd to crown the strong,  
 " Then the weak arm is ever in the wrong :  
 " The hawk may triumph in his lawless deeds,  
 " While doom'd beneath his grip the turtle bleeds :  
 " Yet that I'm guiltless ev'n my charge admits,  
 " And malice, meaning to arraign, acquits.  
 " What tho' the sword lay treach'rous at my side,  
 " Sure guilt could never want the craft to hide ;  
 " The spots of bloody circumstance explain,  
 " That inward truth fears no exterior stain ;  
 " And last my capture with the slain implies,  
 " That guilt, not innocence, from vengeance flies.  
 " I fear not death, but that surviving shame,  
 " Which must to ages blast my spotless name :  
 " Be that from taint of guilty censure freed,  
 " And all that malice can inflict decreed."

THUS while she spake, with secret passion tofs'd,  
 And in a world of new found wonders lost,  
 Scarce Alla could his struggling heart controul;  
 Fix'd were his eyes, but restless was his soul;

His



His breast with various agitation burn'd ;  
 Now pale, now red, his varying aspect turn'd :  
 Her accents dwell upon his list'ning ears ;  
 When now she ceas'd, delighted still he hears ;  
 Her form with chang'd, with fev'rish looks surveys,  
 And could for ever hear, for ever gaze.

At length collected, as from bonds he broke,  
 And with cold speech, and feign'd indiff'rence spoke.  
 " Thy charge (bright maid) my secret soul acquits ;  
 " But publick law no private voice admits.  
 " Kings sit not here, with arbitrary sense,  
 " To form new laws, or caviel, but dispense.  
 " Tho' law is fallible, yet law should sway ;  
 " And kings, more fallible than law, obey.  
 " Say, gallant warriors ! who unmatch'd in arms,  
 " May yield uncensur'd to resistless charms,  
 " Say, is there one who singularly brave  
 " At his own peril greatly dares to save ;  
 " From pain, from death, from slander to defend,  
 " And give the stranger and the fair a friend."

THE hero said, but mute was ev'ry tongue,  
 Blank ev'ry face, and ev'ry nerve unstrung :  
 So much Rodolphus, never match'd in arms,  
 Each weaker hand, and conscious heart alarms ;  
 So was the giant fam'd for brutal pow'r,  
 Strode like an arch, and menac'd like a tow'r.  
 Then Alla ; " Soon as Phosphor's dewy ray,  
 " Shall gild the shade, bright promiser of day,  
 " Prepar'd and metted with the morning light,  
 " Be the rail'd barrier, and the lifts of fight ;  
 " Then e'er the sun, swift mounting up the sky,  
 " Views the wide world with his meridian eye,

" While

" While issuing from the trumpet's brazen throat,  
 " Defiance loudly breathes its martial note,  
 " If haply heav'n (not impotent to aid)  
 " With interposing arm protect the maid,  
 " Some angel, or unlook'd for champion send,  
 " And with prevailing ministry defend;  
 " Freed be the fair, and spotless be her fame:  
 " E'er evening come, she feeds the hungry flame."  
 So spake the prince, descending from his throne;  
 Sad thro' the concourse went the length'ning groan:  
 The maid to death inevitably doom'd,  
 A guiltless victim ev'ry heart presum'd;  
 To her they consecrate the pitying tear,  
 Nor e'er till then could think their prince severe.

CONSTANTIA (when with firm tho' hopeless eye,  
 She now perceiv'd the fatal hour drew nigh)  
 In conscious innocence erects her head;  
 With doubt exil'd, all care and terror fled;  
 Death stole from Triumph to adorn her state,  
 And gave a smile beyond the reach of fate.  
 All night in pray'r and mental song the maid,  
 (With angels choir'd) her soul for heav'n array'd;  
 Light from her heart, as summer's careless robe,  
 Dropt each affection of this sin-worn globe;  
 O'er honour late so lov'd, o'er brutal foes,  
 And ev'ry sense of mortal coil she rose;  
 Till tow'rd the dawn she gently sunk to rest,  
 With all Elysium open'd in her breast.

GREY morning now, involv'd in rising dew,  
 O'er the cap'd hills her streaming mantle threw;  
 While far beyond, the horizontal sun  
 With beam of intersected brightness shone;

Gold-

Gold-pav'd o'er ocean stretch'd his glitt'ring road,  
 And to the shore the length'ning radiance glow'd.  
 Full in his sight, and open to the main,  
 Concurring squadrons throng'd Northumbria's plain ;  
 To learn what fate attends the foreign fair,  
 Each sex and age in mingling routs repair,  
 Whom pour'd by millions to the lifted field,  
 Dispeopl'd towns and emptied hamlets yield.  
 Within the lists conspicuous to the fight,  
 Rode the proud stature of the Saxon knight ;  
 His mien, with thirst of opposition fir'd,  
 Appear'd to menace what it most desir'd ;  
 Gave all to wish some champion for the fair,  
 Gave all to wish the fight, but none to dare ;  
 His bold defiance o'er the measur'd ground,  
 The brazen blasts of winding clarions sound,  
 While strong-lung'd heralds challenge to the fight,  
 And seem at once to threaten and invite.

AND now, expectant of the murd'rous flame,  
 In fable pomp the lovely victim came :  
 On her all looks and cent'ring hearts were fix'd,  
 Love, grief, and awe, with soft compassion mix'd ;  
 To heav'n, the voice of void affliction cries,  
 Earth drinks the tribute of ten thousand eyes :  
 Such sighs as from the dying breast expire,  
 And tears as meant to quench a world on fire :  
 To the tall pyre, in sad procession led,  
 The tranquil maid ascends her sylvan bed,  
 And fearless on the fun'ral summit plac'd,  
 Her seat of fearful preparation grac'd ;  
 Hence, with wide gaze she threw her eyes around,  
 Nor Alla, cruel, lovely Alla, found.

“ Ah !



" Ah! (soft she said) where's this heroic youth?  
 " So fam'd for clemency, so fam'd for truth;  
 " So sage, so cautious in the casuist's chair;  
 " Too firm to deviate, and too just to spare;  
 " To strangers cruel, tho' to subjects kind,  
 " In law discerning, yet to mercy blind.  
 " Why comes not he to feast his savage eyes,  
 " And view the pains he can so well devise?  
 " Heav'n fram'd thee, Alla, with exterior art,  
 " Soften'd thy form, but left a flinty heart;  
 " Too perfect else had been the beauteous plan,  
 " And Alla had been something more than man."

Thus while she spoke, a distant murmur rose,  
 As when the wind thro' rustling forest blows;  
 And gathering now still louder and more near,  
 To mute attention turn'd each list'ning ear.  
 Distinctly heard along the lifted ground,  
 To trumpets now shrill answering trumpets sound,  
 A clam'rous cheer from rank to rank extends,  
 And sudden shout the deafen'd welkin rends.  
 Strait (usher'd to the field with loud acclaim)  
 A knight unknown, and unattended came;  
 No trophy boast, no outward shine of arms,  
 Nor love device, with quaint attraction, charms;  
 Unplum'd the motion of his sable crest,  
 And black the guardian corselet on his breast,  
 Black was the steed that bore him to the field,  
 And black the terror of his ample shield.

As when to flake Ierne's fev'rish plain,  
 And check the dog-star's short but sultry reign,  
 A cloud, full-freighted with the coming storm,  
 Black-brow'd o'er ocean lifts its cumb'rous form;

Dread,

Dread, to the shore its gloomy progress bends,  
 And charg'd with heav'n's avenging bolt suspends ;  
 So to the field the gloomy champion show'd ;  
 So charg'd with mercy as with vengeance rode.  
 Where the bright victim blest'd the circling view,  
 Close to the pyre the sable warrior drew :  
 " Guilty," aloud, " or innocent ?" he cry'd ;  
 " Ah guiltless, so help heav'n !" the maid reply'd.  
 " So by this arm (he said) may heav'n for thee decide."  
 surpriz'd Rodolphus stood, abash'd the bold,  
 And like a torrent in mid course controul'd ;  
 Abash'd to find, that any mortal wight  
 Cou'd singly dare to match his matchless might.  
 But soon, of conscious force, and scorn, and pride,  
 With two-fold fury swell'd th' impetuous tide ;  
 Resistless, dreadful, in his wrath he rose,  
 For courage still with opposition grows.  
 Attending heralds strait divide the field,  
 And the dire interval for combat yield.  
 To either goal retir'd each threatful knight,  
 Fierce thro' restraint, and trembling for the fight ;  
 On each by turns was ev'ry look intent,  
 Now here, now there, with swift emotion bent :  
 Perch'd on the summit of the stranger's crest,  
 Here conquest seem'd to ev'ry eye confest ;  
 Not long confess'd, for from his rival, there,  
 Again the varying judgment learns despair ;  
 For ev'ry wish assum'd the stranger's part,  
 And quick expectance throb'd in ev'ry heart :  
 Fix'd in his seat each waits the dread career,  
 And in each rest firm sits the pond'rous spear ;  
 Each conscious steed impatient beats the ground,  
 Eager and wan was ev'ry face around ;

}

The signal given, they vanish from the goals,  
 Earth backward spurn'd from either courser rolls;  
 Space gathers quick beneath their nimble feet,  
 And horse to horse (tremenduous shock) they meet.  
 Nor yet blind wrath, or headlong valour rul'd,  
 More forceful was their force, by judgment cool'd,  
 The deadly aim each hostile eye selects,  
 Each eye too marks where either arm directs;  
 With art they ward, and with dread action wield,  
 Point with the lance, and parry with the shield.  
 Full at the bosom of his active foe,  
 Rodolphus levell'd the resistless blow,  
 But from his oblique buckler glanc'd the spear,  
 Which else nor targe nor mortal arm could bear;  
 Not so his lance the sable champion sped,  
 Feign'd at his breast, then brandish'd at the head,  
 Thro' his foe's shield the verging weapon press'd,  
 And raz'd the plume that wanton'd on his crest.  
 Together with impetuous onset push'd,  
 Thus horse to horse, and man to man, they rush'd;  
 Then backward driven, by mutual shock, they bound,  
 Beneath the conflict shakes the suff'ring ground.

So wing'd, in war, or darkness, on the deep,  
 Two ships adverse the mediate ocean sweep;  
 With horrid brunt joins each encount'ring prow,  
 Loud roars the rush'd surge, and foams below;  
 Sails, shrouds, and masts, all shiver in the toil,  
 And backwards to their sterns the found'ring keels recoil.

But each well skill'd in ev'ry warlike meed,  
 New to the charge revives the sinking speed;  
 Swift from his side his steely terror drew,  
 And on his foe with answ'ring fury flew.

The



The sway long time intemp'rate valour bore,  
 While artless rage unlearn'd the warrior's lore;  
 On their hack'd arms the restless peal descends,  
 Targe, plate, and mail, and riv'n corselet, rends;  
 Struck from their helmets, the steely sparks aspire,  
 And from their swords forth streams the mingling fire.

As in the glow of some Vulcanian shed,  
 Two brawny smiths heave high the pond'rous sled,  
 Full front to front, a grisly pair, they stand,  
 Between their arms extends the fiery brand;  
 Huge strokes from the tormented anvil bound;  
 Thick flames the air, and groans the lab'ring ground.

So toil'd these heroes with commutual rage,  
 And such reciprocated combat wage.  
 Around them, trembling expectation waits,  
 With speechless horror ev'ry bosom beats;  
 For either seem'd resistless in the fight,  
 But each too seem'd to match resistless might.  
 Surpriz'd at length the wary warriors own,  
 A rival to their arms till then unknown.  
 With mutual wile defensive now they fought,  
 And mutual wounds a mutual caution taught.  
 All dint of force and stratagem they try,  
 Reach with their arms, and measure with their eye;  
 They feint, they ward, strike out, and now evade,  
 Foin with the point, and parry with the blade;  
 Probe each defect, some purpos'd limb expose,  
 Now grappling seize, and with dread union close;  
 Their waists with unenamour'd grasp they wind;  
 Their arms, like cramps, and forceful engines bind;  
 Each strives to lift the other from his seat;  
 Heav'd thick and short, their lab'ring bosoms beat;

Struggling they grip, they pull, they bend, they strain,  
 But firm and still unsway'd their seats retain ;  
 Till loos'd as by consent again they turn,  
 And with reviving force and fury burn.

Thus future ages had this fight beheld,  
 Where both all might excelling, none excell'd ;  
 Had not Rodolphus with impassion'd pride,  
 High heav'd a blow that shou'd at once decide,  
 His utmost pow'rs collected in the stroke,  
 Like thunder o'er the yielding foe he broke.  
 (The foe elusive of the dire intent)  
 His force in air th' embarrass'd pagan spent,  
 And by his bulk of cumb'rous poise o'erfway'd,  
 Full on his helm receiv'd the adverse blade.  
 Prone fell the giant o'er a length of ground ;  
 With ceaseless shouts the echoing heav'ns resound.

As from the brow of some impending steep,  
 The sportive diver views the briny deep,  
 From his high stand with headlong action flies,  
 And turns his heels retorted to the skies ;  
 Inverted so the bulky chief o'erturns,  
 And heav'n, with heel of quick elation, spurns.  
 Light from his steed the conqu'ring hero sprung,  
 And threatful o'er the prostrate monster hung :  
 He, with feign'd penitence, and humbl'd breath,  
 (Fond to evade the fear'd, th' impending death,  
 The instant weapon glitt'ring at his breast)  
 The murd'rous scene and nightly guilt confess'd.

MEAN while attended by the shouting crew,  
 The fair, now freed, to greet her champion flew ;

For

For not of mortal arm the chief she thought,  
 But heav'n's own delegate with vengeance fraught.  
 When now, enchanting to the warrior's fight,  
 The maid drew near, the maid as angel bright,  
 His bever from his lovely face he rais'd,  
 And all on Alla, conqu'ring Alla, gaz'd.  
 Earth, sea, and air, with endless triumph ring,  
 And shouting thousands hail their victor king.  
 Not so Constantia, struck with strange surprize,  
 Her great deliv'rer in her judge she eyes ;  
 Conquest and love upon his regal brow,  
 A cruel judge but kind deliv'rer now :  
 Soft shame, and trembling awe, her step repress'd,  
 And wond'rous gratitude disturb'd her breast ;  
 Joys, fainting fears, quick thrill'd thro' ev'ry vein,  
 And scarce her limbs their beauteous charge sustain.

How widely devious from the ways of man,  
 Is the great maze of providential plan !  
 Vain man, short-sighted politician, dreams,  
 That things shall move subservient to his schemes ;  
 But heav'n the fond projector undermines,  
 And makes the agent thwart his own designs ;  
 Against itself the instrument employs,  
 And with the means the end propos'd destroys.  
 What shall prevent Omniscience to direct ?  
 And what, what can't Omnipotence effect ?  
 He to th' event subdues th' opposing cause,  
 And light from darkness (wondrous influence) draws,  
 Defeat from conquest, infamy from fame,  
 And oft to honour paves the path of shame.  
 Why then this toil, and coil, and anxious care ?  
 Why does man triumph ? why does man despair ?

Why



Why does he chuse by vicious steps to scale,  
 Where virtue may (at least as well) prevail;  
 Since not in him his proper fortune lies,  
 And heav'n alone ordains his fall or rise ;  
 Man may propose, but only heav'n must speed,  
 And tho' the will is free, th' event's decreed.  
 Be then the scope of ev'ry act and thought,  
 To will and do still simply as we ought ;  
 The less shall disappointment's sting annoy,  
 And each success will bring a double joy ;  
 To boundless pow'r and pre-science leave the rest,  
 But thou, enjoy the province in thy breast.

Lo! in one hour, by fortune unforeseen,  
 The lowly criminal becomes the queen ;  
 From shame to glory, anguish to repose,  
 From death to life, and bonds to freedom rose.  
 In love, as war, resistless, Alla woo'd,  
 And whom he won by arms, by suit subdu'd.  
 Constantia with her secret wish comply'd,  
 For Alla would not, could not, be deny'd.

NOR list we here with pomp or long array,  
 To blazen forth that chaste connubial day.  
 To tell what numbers numberless, what knights,  
 And glitt'ring dames adorn'd the festal rites.  
 What joys the banquet or the bowl could yield,  
 Or what the trophies of the tilting field.  
 Loud were the revels, boundless was the mirth,  
 That hail'd the sweetest, brightest pair on earth.  
 Of men, the wisest, bravest, fairest, he ;  
 Of all that's beautiful most beauteous, she.  
 Love, nature, harmony the union claim'd,  
 And each for each, and both for one were fram'd.

But

But we of subsequent adventures treat,  
And hasten to unfold their future state,

SOME months young Alla and his peerless bride,  
In cordial bond of dear accordance ty'd,  
Had look'd and smil'd the precious hours away,  
And fed on bliss that ne'er could know decay;  
He whose turn'd ear on that enchanting tongue,  
With thirst of fondest inclination hung,  
Won by a preacher with so fair a face,  
Becomes the zealous proselyte of grace,  
And subjects too their heath'nish rites forgo,  
For still from courts, or vice or virtues flow.  
But ah! too soon, from beauty's softer charms,  
War, rig'rous war, and Scotia calls to arms;  
Constantia must her blooming hero yield,  
And honour sent him to th' embattl'd field.

MEAN while the pregnant fruit of chaste delight,  
With a male infant crown'd the nuptial rite:  
All sweet and lovely as the smiling morn,  
Mauritius was to bless a nation born;  
Their pledge of future bliss, their princely boy,  
The Britons hail with universal joy.  
Their fancy frames him what their pray'rs require,  
Sweet as their queen, and valiant as his fire.  
Offa to whom the king's departing care,  
(Inestimable charge) consign'd the fair,  
Advice of loyal gratulation sent,  
To glad his sovereign with the blest event.

BUT Donnegilda, cruel, crafty dame,  
Great Alla's mother, over-fond of fame,

She,

She, (as all antique parents, wond'rous sage!  
 For youth project th' inappetence of age,  
 Each sense endearing, and humane, despise,  
 And on the mammon feast their down-cast eyes)  
 Malevolent beheld a stranger led,  
 Unknown, unfriended, to the regal bed;  
 For in the secret closet of her breast,  
 Constantia her imperial birth suppress'd,  
 Till heav'n should perfect the connubial band,  
 And with her royal offspring bless the land.  
 Ah! ill-tim'd caution! were this truth declar'd,  
 What a vast cost of future woe was spar'd;  
 But where heav'n's will th' unequal cause supplies,  
 To set the world on fire, a spark may well suffice.

THE subtle dame who now th' occasion spy'd,  
 To tear Constantia from her Alla's side,  
 Debauch'd the messenger, his mandate stole,  
 And forg'd in Offa's name the crafty scroll,  
 Wherein she fram'd a tale with wond'rous art,  
 How the feign'd fair by witchcraft won his heart,  
 Seduc'd his senses with infernal lore,  
 And a dread monster (hideous offspring) bore.  
 But Alla, of whose fond, whose faithful breast,  
 His consort was the dear eternal guest,  
 Unmov'd return'd, his bliss was too refin'd,  
 Without the just alloy that heav'n assign'd;  
 And what Constantia bore, or heav'n decreed,  
 To be unwelcome must be strange indeed.

THIS letter too the courier, as before,  
 To Britain's dowager-unweeting bore,  
 And in the surfeit of oblivious wine,  
 Left her to perpetrate the black design.

This



This too she cancell'd, forg'd the regal hand,  
 And pityless inscrib'd the dire command,  
 With threats that Offa to the wonted sea,  
 Shou'd the false queen and hated imp convey,  
 And there permit the now detested dame,  
 To seek the shore from whence the sorc'ers came.

WHEN Offa had the barb'rous mandate read,  
 To heav'n his eyes and lifted hands he spread :  
 Like Niobe to marble turn'd he stood ;  
 Grief, fear and horror froze his gen'rous blood.  
 Again he stir'd, as from some wistful dream,  
 Again he read ; alas ! he read the same.

BUT (tho' in terms of soothing phrase express'd)  
 When now Constantia learn'd her lord's behest,  
 Keen anguish, piercing to the springs of life,  
 At once arrests the mother and the wife :  
 For not to her alone confin'd, as late,  
 When bold she stood the weightiest stroke of fate,  
 A thousand cares of soft endearing kind,  
 Now share with heav'n the motions of her mind,  
 And with fond thoughts of sweet concern divide,  
 The melting mother, and the clasping bride :  
 And these alone her bursting bosom rend,  
 And o'er the couch her lifeless limbs extend.

FAME pour'd the mourning populace around ;  
 In gushing anguish ev'ry eye is drown'd :  
 Compassion set her virtues full to view,  
 And with their queen bid ev'ry joy adieu ;  
 Swift from his throne they wish their Alla hurl'd,  
 And her crown'd empress of the peopl'd world.

G

But

But ah! in vain their pray'rs and tears delay,  
 Strict was the charge, and Offa must obey,  
 With heavy heart and faint reluctant hand,  
 He led the mourner to the neighb'ring strand;  
 She to the heaving whiteness of her breast,  
 With melting looks her helpless infant prest,  
 And thus, while sobs her piteous accent broke,  
 Her little inattentive child bespoke:

“ WEEP not, sweet wretch! tho' such thy father's will;  
 “ Yet hast thou not one hapless parent still.  
 “ Peace, peace! to thee thy mother means no harm;  
 “ Nor let our lot thy little heart alarm.  
 “ O'er thee, till death, o'er thee my cares shall wake,  
 “ And love thee for thy cruel father's sake.”

HAD ev'ry fire (as on the banks of Nile)  
 Lost his first-born throughout Britannia's isle;  
 Or death with undistinguish'd carnage swept  
 Wives, sons and fires, by all the living wept;  
 Such haply were the woes that now deplore,  
 Their queen attended to the ecchoing shore;  
 They tear their locks, their rueful bosom smite,  
 And trace her bark with long pursuing sight.  
 Tedious it were, tho' wond'rous strange, to tell,  
 What new adventures o'er the main besel;  
 How fondly prating, while her infant smil'd,  
 She the long hours, and wintry nights beguil'd,  
 Till seiz'd by pirates on th' Atlantic wave,  
 A prince of Gallia bought th' imperial slave;  
 How in calm peace, and friendship long retain'd,  
 High trust and grace her winning sweetness gain'd;  
 Till she to Rome (predestinate event)  
 Associate with her lord and mistress went.

BUT

BUT now to Britain let the muse repair,  
For there the valiant Alla claims her care.

TRIUMPHANT soon from Scotia he return'd,  
And to behold his lov'd Constantia burn'd:  
This wings his feet along the toilsome way;  
But thoughts are swifter, swifter far than they.  
Hope, elevate, the distant journey meets,  
And to his march his heart the measure beats.  
But when o'er Tweed he led his conqu'ring host,  
And trod the verdure of Northumbria's coast,  
While laurels round their trophy'd temples twin'd,  
And banners wanton'd in the circling wind,  
No wonted crouds their once lov'd Alla meet,  
No prostrate knees, or hailing voices greet;  
Blank was his passage o'er the penfive ground,  
And silence cast a mournful gloom around;  
Or if his prince some straggling peasant spy'd,  
As from a basilisk he slunk aside.

WHAT this might mean revolv'd within his breast,  
Conjecture dire and whisp'ring doubts suggest,  
More dread than death, some hideous ill impart;  
This the first fear e'er seiz'd on Alla's heart!  
But worse, O worse than fancy yet could fear,  
When now the killing truth arrests his ear;  
Athwart his eyes and mantling round his soul,  
Thick clouds of grief and inky darkness roll;  
His sense, nor tears, nor utt'ring groans could tell,  
But froze and lock'd in speechless woe he fell.  
At length by care, by cruel kindness, brought  
To all the anguish of returning thought,  
Swift from the sheath he drew the deadly guest,  
And would have pierc'd this vulture in his breast;



Such was the sting of agonizing pain,  
 His frenzy wou'd th' immortal soul have slain ;  
 But this prevented, round th' attending crew,  
 With baleful glance, his eager eyes he threw,  
 Constantia he requires with frantic tongue,  
 Constantia still the restless accents sung ;  
 To her, as present, now his fondness speaks,  
 As absent into desp'rate action breaks :

“ Oh never, never more, my queen ! he cries,  
 “ Shall that known form attract those dying eyes ;  
 “ Never !----O 'tis the worst, the last despair ;  
 “ Never is long, is wond'rous long to bear.  
 “ Down, down, ye cloud-topt hills, your summits stoop,  
 “ With me in sign of endless mourning droop :  
 “ Snapt be the spear, bright armour ground to dust ;  
 “ Repose thou corslet, in eternal rust ;  
 “ Still'd be each tube, the trumpet's warlike swell,  
 “ Empire, and fame, all, all, with thee farewell :  
 “ For thee alone, thy conqu'ring soldier arm'd,  
 “ The banner wav'd, and sprightly clangor charm'd ;  
 “ But arms and loath'd desire with thee are dead,  
 “ And joy, no, never to return, is fled.”

THUS rav'd the youth, to wilful woes resign'd,  
 And offer'd aid was sickness to his mind.  
 To frenzy, by uxorious transports rais'd,  
 His vengeance on his aged parent seiz'd ;  
 Who doom'd to loose that too designing head,  
 A victim to his lov'd Constantia bled.

BUT violence in nature cannot last ;  
 What region's known to bear eternal blast ?  
 Time changes all, dissolves the melting rock,  
 And on fix'd water turns the crystal lock.

Time

Time o'er his anguish shed a silent balm,  
 A peace unsmiling, and a gloomy calm;  
 By ill untaught to mourn, by joy to glow,  
 And still insensible to bliss or woe.

To him, thus careless of the circling year,  
 Five annual suns had roll'd their bright career;  
 To heav'n alone his earthly ardours turn'd,  
 There, late to meet the dear Constantia, burn'd.  
 Still that fond hope remain'd, his sole desire,  
 And gave new wings to the celestial fire:  
 But yet----hereafter!----What might there betide,  
 The blood-stain'd hand, by whom a parent dy'd:  
 This, this gave doubtful thought, unhing'd his rest,  
 And shook the region of his contrite breast:  
 At length taught satiate vengeance to relent,  
 And shipp'd for Rome, the royal pilgrim sent.

O'er Tiber soon the far-fraught tidings sped,  
 (For far beyond the warrior's fame had spread)  
 And Gallia's Hugo, to whose gen'rous care,  
 Protecting heav'n consign'd the wand'ring fair,  
 With those whom virtuous approbation fir'd,  
 As still the brave are by the brave admir'd,  
 To see, to touch the gallant Alla glow'd,  
 And rank'd to meet the regal pilgrim rode.  
 With all due rite and answ'ring grace humane,  
 The courteous prince receiv'd the shining train;  
 But Hugo chief, with port of winning view,  
 The hero's eye and prime affection drew;  
 And him (with note selected from the rest)  
 The prince solicits for a frequent guest.

But

BUT ah! when now it reach'd Constantia's ear,  
 That Alla, lovely barb'rous man, was near,  
 Her soul a thousand diff'rent thoughts assail,  
 Expell'd by turns, by turns they all prevail;  
 With melting joy and burning love she glows,  
 With cooling grief and icy hate she froze;  
 Dear to her heart, tho' horrid to her will,  
 He was the lov'd, the charming Alla still.

NOR Hugo now (in pompous dress array'd)  
 To wait Britannia's potent lord delay'd;  
 With him Mauritius frequent chat supply'd,  
 A little gay companion at his side,  
 He beams a Ganymede, in whose sweet face,  
 The sire and mother liv'd with mingling grace;  
 Here still they met, in beauty reconcil'd;  
 Here still in soft delicious union smil'd;  
 So join'd, so blended, with divinest art,  
 As left it not in any pow'r to part.

UPON the pratler's aspect, with surprize,  
 And charm'd attention, Alla fix'd his eyes;  
 Somewhat of wonted semblance there he spy'd,  
 Dear to his sense, and to his heart ally'd;  
 Somewhat that touch'd beyond all mortal view,  
 And inly with the link of nature drew.  
 Disturb'd he rose; upon his secret soul  
 Unweeting thaw and cordial earnings stole;  
 Big with the soft distress, aside he stept,  
 And much the warrior wonder'd why he wept.  
 Compos'd, he clasp'd the infant to his breast,  
 And ask'd, what sire with such a son was blest?  
 "That (Hugo cry'd) his dame alone must show,  
 "Sire hath he none, or none of whom we know;

" But



" But mother, sure, he hath, that's such a mate  
 " No man can boast, nor boastful tongue relate ;  
 " Tho' fancy, to give semblance of her face,  
 " From all her sex should cull each sep'rate grace,  
 " To speak her soul should rob from ev'ry faint,  
 " Low yet were phrase, and all description faint."

THUS while his tongue with free encomium flow'd,  
 With strange emotion Alla's aspect glow'd ;  
 Full on his heart the dear idea rush'd,  
 His cheek with hope and lively ardor flush'd ;  
 When strait despondence sick'ning in his soul,  
 From its known seat the rosy tincture stole :  
 " Once, once he cry'd (the lab'ring sigh suppress'd)  
 " Such treasure once these widow'd arms possess'd.  
 " Nature is rich----yet gladly should I know,  
 " If the world's round can such another show. "  
 " Be that (reply'd the Gallic chief) confess'd,  
 " Whene'er my house boasts Alla for a guest."

THEY went----but when the long dis sever'd pair,  
 Her Alla here, and his Constantia there----  
 By doubts, loves, fears, and rushing joys dismay'd,  
 Unmov'd, each face with mutual gaze survey'd.  
 Such was the scene, th' impassion'd gesture such,  
 As phrase can't reach, nor liveliest pencil touch.  
 Three times the fair one fought the shades of death,  
 Three times reviv'd by Alla's balmy breath ;  
 And thrice his guiltless plea he would essay,  
 And thrice she turn'd, Constantia turn'd away.  
 " Now, by this hand (Britannia's hero cry'd)  
 " This hand by whom a cruel parent dy'd,  
 " Long since for thee, for thee thou dear one, bled,  
 " A victim sacred to that injur'd head,

" Of all thy wrongs thy Alla is as clear,  
 " As here my son, thy other Alla here.  
 " Ah ! could you know the anguish, the distress,  
 " (But who can know what words can ne'er express)  
 " What racks, what deaths, thy tort'ring absence cost,  
 " What restless toil this suff'ring bosom tofs'd !  
 " 'Twas such a ruin, such a breach of care,  
 " As this and only this could e'er repair."

So saying, swift resistless to his breast,  
 The yielding fair repeated transport press'd ;  
 But when all doubt and cold suspicion clear'd,  
 Her lord still faithful as belov'd appear'd,  
 By her so oft so cruelly accus'd,  
 Still kind and true, and as herself abus'd,  
 She in his bosom, all with joy o'erpower'd,  
 Of sobs and tears the copious tempest showr'd ;  
 All eyes around the melting measure kept,  
 And pleasure thro' contagious transport wept :  
 For heav'n alone can emulate the sweet  
 Of one hour's bliss, when two such lovers meet.

STILL had Constantia, lock'd within her breast,  
 The royal secret of her birth suppress'd,  
 When Rome's imperial monarch wide invites  
 To social cheer and festival delights ;  
 For now triumphant from the Syrian coast,  
 Tho' long detain'd, return'd his vengeful host ;  
 And to reward their toils, and drown their cares,  
 The monarch on a solemn day prepares.  
 With festal robes adorn'd each warrior came,  
 In glitt'ring vesture many a Roman dame ;  
 And there amid the peers, a peerless guest,  
 There Alla came in regal splendors drest ;

All India beaming at the hero's side ;  
 O'er beaming India shone his brighter bride ;  
 While the young joy of each applauding tongue,  
 Mauritius on his smiling parents hung ;  
 As tho' a stripling cherub should attend,  
 Where two of prime angelic rank descend,  
 Struck at the pleasing prospect all admire,  
 But mute with wonder stood th' imperial fire ;  
 For haply, since our primal parents fell,  
 Ne'er met a pair that could this pair excel.

He at his left Britannia's monarch plac'd,  
 And his right hand th' unknown Constantia grac'd.  
 When with a starting tear the rev'rend man  
 (To Alla turn'd) in placid speech began :  
 " Young tho' thou art, with earliest vigour strung,  
 " And the fond theme of fame's applauding tongue,  
 " 'Tis said thou hast the stings of fortune felt,  
 " And such can learn from others woes to melt :  
 " I had a daughter, once my only care,  
 " As virtuous as thy consort, and as fair ;  
 " But her (sad cause of folly to repent)  
 " To Syria with a num'rous train I sent ;  
 " And there the toil, the treach'rous toil was spread,  
 " And there Constantia, there my child you bled !  
 " Around the maid her brave attendants fell,  
 " Nor one was left the fatal tale to tell ;  
 " Hence age through grief has doubly known decay,  
 " And care untimely turn'd my locks to grey.  
 " This day, selected from the circling year,  
 " To her I consecrate the annual tear ;  
 " And these the chiefs, who in her quarrel crown'd,  
 " Have late in vengeance bath'd the hostile ground.

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" But vain is Vengeance where all hope is fled,  
 " Nor hosts of victims can revive the dead !  
 " My child ! thou'st robb'd my life of all delight ;  
 " But death shall soon our happier souls unite."  
 Nor yet he ended----when with troubl'd mien,  
 Quick at his knees low bow'd Britannia's queen.  
 " Not so, not so, my father (loud she cry'd)  
 " See here thy child, thy daughter at thy side !  
 " Why look you thus with wild and piercing eye ?  
 " Your daughter here, your daughter you descry !  
 " Constantia, who through many a death survives,  
 " And yet to see her king and sire, arrives."  
 " Yes, yes, you are my child !----these accents tell !"----  
 He could no more, but on her neck he fell ;  
 Down her soft cheek his mingling tears o'erflow,  
 Joy, joy too great, assum'd the form of woe ;  
 The roof surprize and echoing transport tore,  
 And eyes then wept that never wept before.

WING'D as an arrow from some vig'rous arm,  
 Through Rome's wide city flew the glad alarm :  
 " Constantia's here---she lives---she lives---(they cry'd)  
 " Constantia now the British hero's bride."  
 Around the palace pour'd in wild delight,  
 On thousands gath'ring thousands strait unite ;  
 With ceaseless clamours, and extended hands,  
 Constantia's presence ev'ry voice demands ;  
 Constantia, Alla, and their lovely boy,  
 They claim, the blooming pledge of future joy ;  
 Forth strait they come, conspicuous to the view,  
 And greet with graceful mien th' applauding crew ;  
 In shouts to heav'n their exultations fly,  
 And universal joy torments the sky.

F I N I S.



